

Iraqis who have joined the police force for the right reasons, to those who are serving in the military for the right reasons, to those politicians trying to bring that country together with a unity coalition government, my hat is off to you. I admire you. I am proud to stand by your side. I have no desire to leave you in a lurch. I have every confidence that you want us gone as much as we want to leave, but you understand your capacity is limited right now.

The National Security Adviser said there is a roadmap for us to leave, and the Iraqi people want to have the ability to chart their own destiny sooner rather than later.

To my friends in the Senate, if the U.S. Congress sets a timetable, it is a rebuke of the Government in Iraq. It is a vote of no confidence in the Iraqi people, and it will be seen as such on al-Jazeera and throughout the Middle East.

There will be a timetable for us to leave. It will be performance driven, and it will be authored by the Iraqi people themselves. The day they set the timetable and they set the benchmarks, it will empower their Government and their people and it will diminish the terrorists. If we set those timetables and the benchmarks, it will diminish the Iraqi Government, all of the efforts of the Iraqi people, and empower the terrorists.

I hate to say that I disagree with my good friends, but I do. We are going to come home one day. That day is not so far away. History will judge us by not when we left but by what we left behind. I want to leave behind a regime capable of pulling off something no one else has been able to do in the Middle East, a functioning democracy so the Shias and Sunnis and Kurds can live together under the rule of law and they can take out their differences at the ballot box and the courtroom. It has been 3½ years almost. They have come a long way. We have been at this over 200 years. We still have our problems. Under the best of circumstances it is very difficult to bring people together of different backgrounds, religions, and ethnic groups. We had our own Civil War. It started in my State. When we wrote our Constitution, after 11 years, women couldn't vote. African Americans were not even recognized as people. We have come a long way, and it has taken us a long time to get there.

Our Iraqi friends, the moderates are fighting and dying for their own freedom. They have come a long way in 3½ years. I am begging this body, let us not, as a body, set a timetable that would diminish their sacrifice and not recognize it for what it is. The truth is, the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people are doing historic things in the Mideast that no one else has been able to accomplish. They are not lazy. They are not indifferent. They are not letting us fight their war. They are fighting it alongside us and dying. They are dying in larger numbers than we are. If

they pull this off with our help, the world will be eminently safer. If they fail, moderate forces in the Mideast will be less likely to rear their head and stand up against terrorists, and the terrorists will seize the moment in the decades to come.

Never has so much been at stake for mankind and with so few people sacrificing. Stand with the Iraqi people. They want us out, but don't diminish their sacrifice.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. WARNER. I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Colorado.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the situation in Iraq and to ask several questions about the withdrawal proposals being offered by the other side.

Why would we risk our success by a premature withdrawal? Why would we risk handing over Iraq to the terrorists when they are on the run? Why would we send a message to the families who had loved ones die fighting for freedom that it was all in vain? Why would we pass legislation that calls for the withdrawal of our troops and that undermines everything we have achieved? These same questions are being asked by many of my constituents in Colorado.

According to the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, a key newspaper in Colorado's western slope:

President Bush and Congress are right not to set a date certain for moving all the troops out of Iraq. That would signal terrorists they only need to hide out until the Americans leave, then reignite their attacks. . . . And it would tell others that our commitment to freedom in the Middle East is limited.

I ask unanimous consent that the editorial from the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Daily Sentinel, June 18, 2006]
IT WOULD BE FOLLY FOR CONGRESS TO CUT
AND RUN

Days after President George W. Bush told the new prime minister of Iraq that the United States would not abandon the fledgling democratic nation to terrorists, both houses of Congress gave the president much-needed overwhelming support for his position.

Late Thursday the Senate voted 93-6 to reject a deadline by the end of this year to withdraw all U.S. troops from Iraq. On Friday, the House voted 256-153 to kill a deadline for withdrawal from Iraq.

No one wants to keep American military personnel in that dangerous country indefinitely and risk more than the 2,500 U.S. military personnel who have already sacrificed their lives there. Fortunately, there are encouraging signs that the United States may be able to start reducing its military presence before long.

The raid on the safehouse of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi proved to be successful far beyond the death of one important leader. It pro-

vided a treasure trove of computer documents and other intelligence that led to more than 400 additional raids and the arrests of more than 700 suspected terrorists.

What's more, 140 of the additional raids and many of the arrests were handled entirely by Iraqi forces, without back-up from U.S. troops, a sign that the Iraqi forces are becoming more capable of protecting their country.

Additionally, with an Iraqi Cabinet finally in place, the government has initiated much-needed security efforts in and around Baghdad. Those measures haven't eliminated terrorist attacks, but they may be slowing them.

Even so, Bush and Congress are right not to set a date-certain for moving all of the troops out of Iraq. That would signal terrorists they only need to hide out until the Americans leave, then reignite their attacks. And it would tell others that our commitment to freedom in the Middle East is limited.

There was, to be sure, a good deal of politics involved in the Republicans' push for a vote on Iraq. But it was not entirely the GOP's doing.

It was Democrats such as Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts and Rep. John Murtha of Pennsylvania who have been loudly calling for an immediate troop withdrawal from Iraq. With congressional elections in November, it makes sense to let voters see how their senators and representatives feel about withdrawing now.

Nobody should read these votes as unqualified support for Bush administration and the mistakes it has made, especially in underestimating the strength of the terrorists. But the votes do recognize it would be wrong to abandon the Iraqis even as they are beginning to take control of their country. And that's good news, not so much for either party's election prospects, but for the ongoing efforts to overcome the savage forces of Islamofascism.

Mr. ALLARD. Relationships between the 3rd Armored Cavalry and the local community were so strong that the Iraqi mayor of the city of Tall Afar actually traveled to Colorado Springs to present these soldiers with a proclamation from the city.

I ask unanimous consent that the full copy of the proclamation be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR, CITY OF TALL'AFAR
IN THE NAME OF GOD THE COMPASSIONATE AND
MERCIFUL

To the Courageous Men and Women of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, who have changed the city of Tall'Ar from a ghost town, in which terrorists spread death and destruction, to a secure city flourishing with life.

To the lion-hearts who liberated our city from the grasp of terrorists who were beheading men, women and children in the streets for many months.

To those who spread smiles on the faces of our children, and gave us restored hope, through their personal sacrifice and brave fighting, and gave new life to the city after hopelessness darkened our days, and stole our confidence in our ability to reestablish our city.

Our city was the main base of operations for Abu Mousab Al Zarqawi. The city was completely held hostage in the hands of his henchmen. Our schools, governmental services, businesses and offices were closed. Our